

APPROVED:

3/13/89

ATTEST:

Sham Allen

Mayor and Council
Rockville, Maryland
Meeting No. 6-89

February 6, 1989

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Work Session in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, Maryland at Vinson Street in Rockville on Monday, February 6, 1989 at 7:35 p.m.

Present

Mayor Douglas Duncan

Councilmember Steve Abrams

Councilmember James Coyle

Councilmember Viola Hovsepian

Councilmember David Robbins

The Mayor in the Chair.

In attendance: Bruce Romer, City Manager; Paul Glasgow, City Attorney; Carolyn Barnett-Jones, Election/Records Management Clerk.

Re: Introduction: FY 1990
Preliminary Issues

Mr. Romer opened the preliminary budget Work Session with a brief description of actual and proposed organizational changes, highlighting the new three division structure of the Police Department and the development of a special events division within Recreation and Parks. He explained that the three division structure is subject to change upon the appointment of the new police chief.

Regarding the General Fund Balance, the City Manager said that the City will utilize pay-as-you-go financing for Capital Improvements Projects (CIP).

Kevin Deckard, Director of Finance noted that there are several opportunities to use available monies to keep the debt from increasing.

Mr. Romer presented an overview of City-wide concerns which included a 24-hour City Hall, requests for extra staff and equipment, studies on the impact of federal mandates on personnel policies, public works activities, and the competitiveness of City pay scales and City Hall space requirements.

Councilmember Coyle asked Mr. Romer to add the comparison of new development costs to revenues as an issue to be considered along with future tax revenues.

Mr. Romer raised the subject of Employee Assistance which was explained by Cecil Keene, Personnel Officer. Mr. Keene said that the City has proposed a program which would provide confidential referrals for substance abuse counseling to employees. The program would be administered by an outside firm on a contract basis.

Re: Department of Finance

Mr. Deckard stated that the factors influencing the FY 1990 budget as well as the 1989 requests are: improved communications with utilities customers and vendors, investment of City funds at optimum yields, the expansion of employee training, minimizing the costs of fringe benefits, and holding the Rockville debt to a level that would ensure fixed debt service costs.

The Finance Director asked Dave Mays, to report on the progress and future needs of Data Processing.

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Mr. Mays said that the Data Processing Department has requested two new positions:

- 1) a senior analyst to maintain the existing mainframe
- 2) a microcomputer specialist dedicated to the high demand for operator support

The rate of acquisition of personal computers has exceeded projections by 200 percent and the Data Processing Department cannot provide adequate support. At present, operators often must wait two to three hours for assistance.

Mr. Deckard readdressed the meeting. He stated that some of the goals of the Finance Department include recommending debt policies and developing a vendor handbook that would explain City policy to businesses as well as provide information on how the bid process works and what licenses are required.

Re: Department of
Public Works

Robert Goodin, the Director of Public Works stated that two of the primary areas of concern are the Ritchie Park connection and the impact of cable television on PEPCO services.

Mr. Goodin said that the City will continue to contract out street sweeping services and that it will work with Montgomery County on a composting and recycling experiment. The recycling program should enhance services to residents and several new positions will develop as a result of it.

The Director of Public Works said that the Department is taking steps to increase staff to avoid overusing workers from the Department of Recreation and Parks. In addition, about 20 top staff positions will be vacant soon and will have to be restaffed.

Councilmember Abrams asked Mr. Goodin to provide the Mayor and Council with a list of areas under federal and state mandates.

Re: Community Development

Doug Horne, Director of Community Development said that department is exploring several projects including a farmers' market (in conjunction with Montgomery County), several Town Center events, and activities to attract potential tenants to the Town Center.

The following projects are near completion by Community Development:

- 1) the report on the Polinger Agreement
- 2) the Voluntary Rent Stabilization Guidelines
- 3) the concentrated Community Enhancement Surveys
of all neighborhoods east of I-270
- 4) the reorganization of the Division of Licenses and
Inspections designed to integrate non-residential code
enforcement with construction.

Mr. Horne also reported that of 650 Landlord and Tenant complaints received, only two or three cases may go to the Commission.

Councilmember Coyle asked if the City can train civic association members to recognize code violations. Mr. Horne said that it would be difficult because code violations are sometimes confused with aesthetic preferences.

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With regard to personnel, Mr. Horne said that Housing Inspectors should be taught "survival Spanish."

Mr. Horne will provide the Mayor and Council with the dates of small business activities.

Re: Recreation and Parks

Greg Bayor, the Director of Recreation and Parks, said that one of the department's major goals is to promote the "hometown" identity through special and community events. He said that a special event on the West End of the City is scheduled for the week following Labor Day.

Mr. Bayor said that the use of the Civic Center Mansion has peaked and that registration for programs is up.

With regard to personnel, Recreation and Parks has proposed a Special Operations crew comprised of one foreman and two part-time seasonal employees to concentrate on specialty tasks and events.

He explained that some of the factors influencing the proposed FY 1990 budget are the increase in service demands for both recreation programs and park maintenance, the opening of the new pool at the Swim Center and the dramatic increase in events scheduled under the "hometown" identity program.

**Re: Department of
Community Services**

Donald Vandrey, Director of Public Information said that the caseload in the Department of Community Services is up and that the City has had to turn down youth services cases. In addition, the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is taking over three complex cases.

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Factors influencing the FY 1990 Budget are the growing Human Rights complaint caseload, the State Juvenile Services Administration reorganization and the demand for adult counselor training in drug and alcohol abuse counseling.

Councilmember Abrams asked if programs exist or may be developed to assist homeless children. Mr. Vandrey said that no such programs are in place but that Community Services will check on cases of "Late Night Latch Key Children". However, the City continues to look to the County to take the lead in developing programs for the homeless.

Re: Department of Planning

The Director of Planning, Rick Kuckkahn, reported that the Rockville Pike Corridor Plan is in final review and that it will be presented to the Mayor and Council in an upcoming Work Session. In addition, the West End Plan is completed and the Goals Task Force summary is expected to be finalized by June 1989.

Mr. Kuckkahn said that future issues to be examined by the Department of Planning include: increased pressure on state, county and city resources to provide services formerly provided by the Federal Government; the migration of Federal agencies to the suburbs; the development housing needs to meet changing demographic demands; the impact of development outside of City annexation policy and the reexamination of the Master Plan.

Re: Department of Police

Captain John Miller, Acting Chief of the Rockville Department of Police,

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said that a re-designed written directive system along with a communications system merged with the County's Computer Aided Dispatch system was implemented last month.

In the area of personnel, Captain Miller recommended that the division of the department into three divisions--Administrative Services, Field Services and Support Services--remain in effect. The Police Department has requested two additional neighborhood service officers and training for all officers in crisis management, cultural awareness and language training.

Re: Summary of Work Session

Mr. Romer said that four major themes are shared by several departments.

They are:

- 1) the need for foreign language skills
- 2) redevelopment
- 3) increase in service demands
- 4) enhanced communications

Mr. Romer said that input on the budget from the Boards and Commissions is invited. On May 1, 1989, the proposed budget will be presented to the Mayor and Council.

Re: Executive Session

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, in Work Session, the meeting was closed for Executive Session at 9:40 p.m. to discuss land disposition.

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Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council in Executive Session, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m. to convene again in General Session on Monday, February 13, 1989 at 7:30 p.m. or at the call of the Mayor